of the Bamboo Brook," His matrimonial ventures were many. He was never successful in attaining to high public office—the conventional road to distinction—nor was he long far removed from poverty. He was too much of a bohemian for that. For a time in early middle life he was in Ch'angan, a favorite with Hsiian Tsung (Ming Huang) and one of the brilliant and gay group who made the court of that Emperor famous. In company with others of the "Eight Immortals of the Wine-cup" he frequented the taverns of the city, and on at least one occasion is said to have been brought drunk into the imperial presence. After three years he fell into disgrace, why is not known, perhaps because he had incurred the displeasure of the reigning beauty, Yang Kuei-fei, whose charms he had celebrated in many a poem. Again he went on his travels. In his later years his wanderings were troubled by the confusion attending the uprising of An Lu-shan, and he narrowly escaped execution for having attached himself to the fortunes of another unsuccessful rebel of these stormy years. A popular tradition has it that he finally came to his end by drowning, when, drunk and out boating, he attempted to embrace the reflection of the moon in the water. Unfortunately for romance, he seems to have died, in most prosaic fashion, in 762, while living with a kinsman in the present Anhui. He was fond not only of the town and of gay and rather loose living, but of the mountain and the stream, and in him ran a strong Taoist strain. His poems appear to have been largely spontaneous, dashed off rapidly, not labored, and are noted for their lyric beauty, their mastery of the use of words, their originality of style, and both for their skill in handling the older poetic forms and for their

successful variations of and departures from literary conventions. He knew anxiety and disappointment, but sought escape from them, and helped his readers to do so, into a dream world, lifted there in an ecstasy of form and rhythm.

Tu Fu (712-770), also for a time at the court of Hsiian Tsung and one of the "Eight Immortals of the Wine-cup," led a life marked by much suffering. Although precocious as a youth, he failed to attain distinction in the imperial examinations. After much waiting and disappointment, in early middle life he won favor, through his writing, with Ming Huang. He was separated from his family for long periods during the years of civil strife